

DRUG-RELATED HOMICIDES IN ATLANTA 1984 THROUGH 1988

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ABSTRACT

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DRUG-RELATED HOMICIDES IN ATLANTA: 1984 THROUGH 1988

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Media accounts and literature indicate that the drug scene in the United States is fraught with violence. This study focuses on an examination of drug-related homicides in a predominantly black metropolitan city, Atlanta, Georgia from January 1, 1984 through December 31, 1988. Data were collected from the following sources: Bureau of Police Services, Homicide Division; interviews with Atlanta police homicide investigators; Fulton County District Attorney's office; and the Fulton County Coroner's office. These data were analyzed in two stages: (1) The construction of a sociodemographic profile for perpetrators and victims; and, (2) the testing of a situational explanatory model of homicide.

The study findings revealed that: (1) both victims and perpetrators were overwhelmingly young low income, undereducated black males with prior criminal histories; (2) Crack/cocaine was the primary drug frequently related to the homicides; and the most



common motive was disputes between dealers and buyers, followed by disputes between rival dealers. Less common was drug users becoming irrational and exhibiting violent behavior.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgements.....	i
Table of Contents.....	ii
List of Tables.....	iv
List of Figures.....	v
 <b>Chapter 1</b>	
<b>INTRODUCTIONS.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Background Information.....	2
Statement of the problem.....	5
Scope and Plan of the Study.....	5
Source of Data.....	6
Importance of the Study.....	6
Limitations of the Study.....	7
 <b>Chapter 2</b>	
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>8</b>
Summary of Literature.....	18
Theoretical Models.....	19
 <b>Chapter 3</b>	
<b>CONCEPTUAL MODEL and METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>22</b>
Conceptual Model.....	22
Objective of the Study.....	24
Data Collection Procedures.....	24
Criteria for the Selection of Cases.....	25
Discussion of the Criteria.....	27

## TABLE OF CONTENTS CONT'D

	Page
Sample Selection.....	28
Description of Case Files.....	30
Analytical Procedures.....	31
<b>Chapter 4</b>	
DATA ANALYSIS.....	33
Profile Analysis.....	33
Discussion of Profiles.....	40
Explanatory Model.....	42
Discussion of Systemic Homicides.....	53
<b>Chapter 5</b>	
CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS.....	56
Policy Implications.....	58
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	61
APPENDICIES.....	66

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 4.1 Homicide Victims/Perpetrators by age, race, and gender.....	34
Table 4.2 Homicide Victims by Economic status.....	35
Table 4.3 Homicide Perpetrators by Economic status.....	36
Table 4.4 Homicide Perpetrators by Education.....	37
Table 4.5 Homicide Event by Weapon.....	44
Table 4.6 Victim/Offender Relationships.....	45
Table 4.7 Homicide Event by Motives.....	48
Table 4.8 Homicide Event Using Conceptual Framework.....	50
Table 4.9 Circumstances of Systemic Homicides.....	53

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1.1 Drug-Related Homicides and Homicides.....	3
Figure 3.1 Conceptual Model of Drug-Related Homicides.....	23
Figure 4.1 Victims and Offenders Criminal Background.....	39
Figure 4.2 Drug Involved in Homicide.....	43

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on an examination of drug-related homicides in Atlanta, Georgia from January 1, 1984 through December 31, 1988. This five calendar year period was selected because the so-called "crack" epidemic began in 1984. Since then, there has been a constant increase in Atlanta's violent crime rate including homicide rates which show this city to be the crime capital of the nation.

The five year study while not completely representative of homicide data over time, nevertheless does yield some significant data on drug-related homicides despite the difficulties that law enforcement officers have in determining what are and what are not drug-related. The actual number of those involved in drug-related homicides is unknown and there has been some uncertainty concerning the criteria and definitions that provide the link between drugs and homicides. Atlanta homicides after reaching a high of 200 in 1980, steadily declined to a low of 135 in 1984. Since then the numbers have increased to 217 in 1988

Politicians and the media have often attributed many homicides occurring in the city over the past five years to drugs (Atlanta Journal Constitution, November 1 and 6, 1988; April 14, 1989; January 25, 1990).

However, according to official police statistics, drug-related homicides comprise only a fraction of Atlanta's homicides, but the police statistics do show an increase in drug-related homicides over the past five years from six percent in 1984 to 17 percent in 1988.

### Background Information

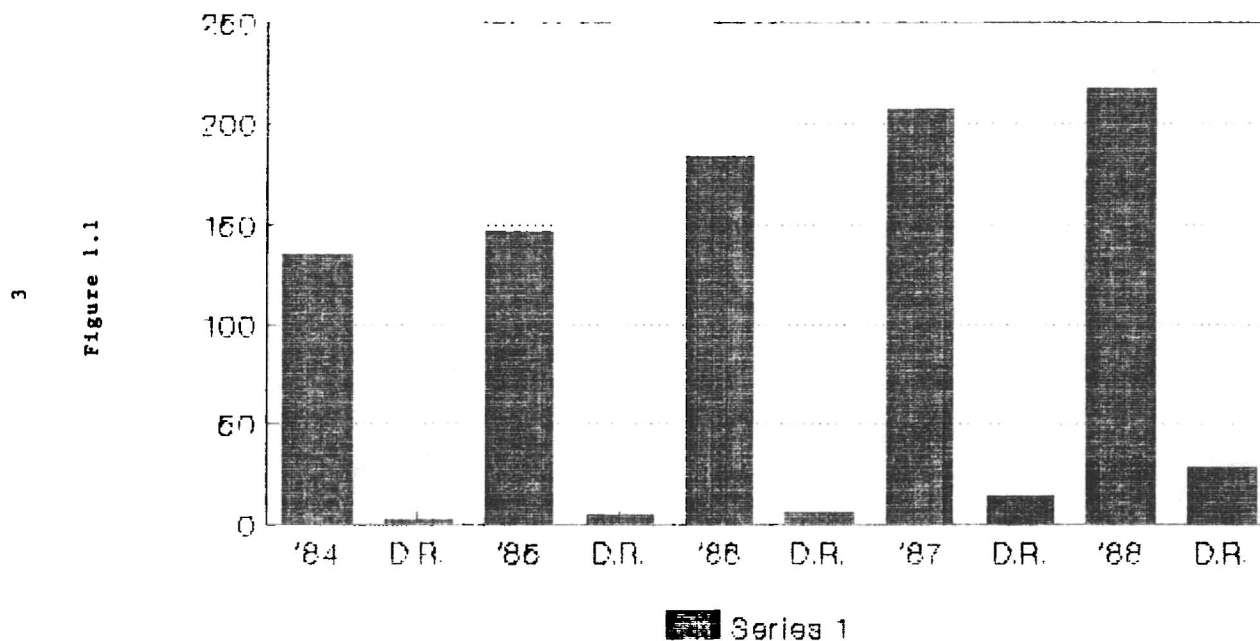
The City of Atlanta is located in Fulton and Dekalb Counties. 1980 census shows that the city had a population of 396,000, of which sixty-eight percent are black or of other racial origin, and 32 percent are white. Atlanta is the largest city in the State of Georgia and is ranked thirtieth in the United States.

In 1984, the nation experienced a "crack epidemic" and Atlanta was one of the cities that saw an increase in drug-related crimes. There has been a marked increase in crack related violence and arrests in the poor inner-city areas. Data shows a fourfold increase in cocaine-related arrests over the last three years. The police department estimates that 35 percent or more of those arrested for drugs were crack-related.

One of the areas that the increase was noted was in homicides. The homicide rate has increased steadily since 1984 (Figure 1, Annual Homicide Reports, 1984 to 1988). The actual number of those involved in drug-related homicides is unknown. Estimates of drug-related homicides have ranged from 17 percent to



# Atlanta 1984 - 1988 Drug-Related and Homicides



Source: Atlanta Police Public Relations

DR = DRUG RELATED

60 percent. Estimates vary depending on the source of the estimates, the Mayor's office has one estimate, and the media reports a different estimate (Atlanta Journal Constitution, April 14, 1989). It is difficult to get an exact figure on the number of homicides that are drug-related because data on the perpetrators use of drug at the time of the incident is not collected. But we can speculate from the data that is available on the victim(s), e.g. in 1988, the coroner reported that 50 percent of all homicide victim had traces of cocaine in their system (Fulton County Medical Examiner).

Most of the homicides are committed by blacks against blacks in poor neighborhoods. The Atlanta Police Department reports that cocaine trafficking and its accompanying violence have overcome the poor black neighborhoods and infiltrated the surrounding areas.

Reportedly, both powdered cocaine and pre-prepared crack are being brought into Atlanta by drug gangs. The main suppliers are thought to be members of a loose network originating from south Florida called the 'Miami Boys.' Smaller Jamaican posse gangs have also established crack houses in various parts of the city. These gangs recruit adolescents from 13 to 18 years of age to sell drugs on the street (Annual Police Reports).

Crack/cocaine remains the most widely abused drug in Atlanta, however, heroin is reportedly more

available on the streets and becoming more common among drug users in Atlanta. The practice of speedballing (heroin and crack) is also becoming more common (Annual Police Reports, 1988; Community Epidemiology Work Group, June 1988).

### Statement of the Problem

This study addresses the problem of drug-related homicides in Atlanta. Specifically this researcher attempts to devise a profile of homicide perpetrators and victims, and (2) to construct an explanatory model of homicide. It perforce includes some data on drug trafficking and its relationship to crime. Atlanta is apparently experiencing a drug epidemic. There has been a marked increase in drug-related crimes, particularly in arrests for crack/cocaine violence in poor inner-city areas. Residents of the inner-city projects report that the drug trafficking and its accompanying violence have overcome their neighborhoods.

### Scope and Plan of the Study

This research, though exploratory, focuses on: (1) the profiles of perpetrators and victims, and (2) the victim-offender relationship. In regard to the latter this study constructs an explanatory model based on a combination of two existing models, i.e., of Goldstein, et al. (1985) and Sparks (1982). For further details on these two theoretical models see Chapter 3. This

combined model was tested utilizing all available data from the Atlanta Police department. Sociodemographic profiles were analyzed in terms of race, gender, income level, criminal background, and educational level for perpetrators and victims. The situational explanatory model was based on the relationship that existed between the perpetrator and victim, type of weapon used, drug involved in the homicide act and motive for the homicide.

#### Source of Data

Primary data were collected from the records of the Bureau of Police Services, Homicide Division. Secondary background data were obtained from interviews with Bureaus of Police Services, Homicide Division investigators, Fulton County District Attorney's reports, and the Fulton County Coroner's office.

#### Importance of the Study

Homicide is a commonplace occurrence in the nation's black communities and with the advent of drugs is cited as a catalyst leading to lethal violence (Rose and McClain, 1981). It is therefore crucial that this phenomenon be addressed. The results of this study will provide law enforcement and community agencies with profiles of perpetrators and victims involved in drug-related homicides, along with a situational explanatory model.

### Limitations of the Study

A major problem with conducting this study was that the Bureau of Police Services, Homicide Division does not identify the drug-relatedness of homicide cases unless drugs were identified as being directly relevant to the criminal investigation of the case. The Department also does not have a written definition of what constitutes a drug-related homicide. This study attempted to provide a working definition for the homicide division to utilize in their classification. The claim is not made that this profile and model will prove completely explanatory. Many theoretical questions remain and the data base for both profiles and model is incomplete.

## Chapter 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Because the phenomenon of drug-related homicide is relatively an unexplored topic in social science research, the literature reviewed herein focuses on the broader category of drug use and crime with particular emphasis on the role of drugs in violent crime.

The relationship between crime and drug use has been of major interest in criminology for most of this century (McBride and McCoy, 1981; Inciardi, 1980, 1986; Ball, Rosen, Flueck and Nurco, 1983, 1985; Johnson, Goldstein, Preble, Schmeidler, Lipton, Spunt and Miller, 1985; Voss and Stephen, 1983; Gandossy, et al., 1980; Stephen and Ellis, 1975). Most of this research has focused on nonviolent crime (Inciardi, 1979).

Basically, policy-makers and administrators have argued that a particular level of drug abuse, notably narcotics use, results in a concomitant level of property crimes (Kozel and Dupont, 1977). During the 1920s Dr. Lawrence Kolb of the U.S. Public Health Service made the following report on drugs and violence:

There is probably no more absurd fallacy prevalent than the notion that murders are committed and daylight robberies and hold-ups are carried out by men stimulated by cocaine or heroin which has temporarily distorted them into self-imagined heroes incapable of fear...Violent crime would be much more prevalent if all habitual criminals

were addicts who could obtain sufficient morphine or heroin to keep themselves fully charged with one of these drugs at all times.

Kolb's argument was based on his belief that all preparations of the opiates capable of producing addiction tend to inhibit aggressive impulses and; furthermore, that their soothing narcotic properties render psychopaths less likely to commit crimes of violence. He went on to document his position empirically by comparing homicide rates in Chicago and New York for the period 1912 through 1923. However, the Kolb study was full of inconsistencies and contradictions (Inciardi, 1986). In the next two decades after Kolb's report was published some studies reiterated his position.

In 1957, the Council on Mental Health of the American Medical Association stated that the belief that opiates per se directly incited otherwise normal people to violent assaulting criminal acts (including sexual crimes), was not tenable (American Medical Association, 1957, p. 1834).

During the 1960s the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice reached the same conclusion (Task Force on Narcotics and Drug Use, 1957, pp. 10-11). The conclusion from these studies was that narcotic users tended toward burglary and prostitution, low risk activities that generated the income necessary to acquire the drugs. What the

American Medical Association and the President's Commission were reacting to was the growing body of studies that were empirically documenting the fact that drug users were not coming to the attention of the criminal justice system for the Commission of Violent Crimes (McBride, 1976). In 1957, for example, sociologist Harold Finestone's (1957) found in a jail population that heroin users engaged primarily in nonviolent property crimes. Other studies have argued that individuals involved in violence become less so after initiation into drug use (Preble and Casey, 1969; Kozel and Dupont, 1977).

In 1972, the "fear of crime" climbed to new heights. According to a Gallup poll in that year, almost half of those surveyed were afraid to walk in their neighborhoods at night, and drug addiction was cited among the major reasons for the high crime rate (New York Times, April 23, 1972, p.23) By January 1973, crime was ranked highest among the nation's urban problems, with drug use ranking third (Washington Post January 16, 1973 p.A3). When President Nixon launched the "war on drugs" he stated:

No single law-enforcement problem has occupied more time, effort, and money in the past four years than that of drug abuse and drug addiction. We have regarded drugs as 'public enemy number one,' destroying the most precious resource we have-our young people-and breeding lawlessness, violence and death" (Inciardi and Chambers, 1974 p. 221).



Estimated federal expenditures during his years of the presidency for drug-abuse prevention and law enforcement increased from 150.2 million in 1971 to 654.8 million two years later (Inciardi and Chambers, p. 222).

The use and sale of cocaine, or 'crack' have expanded tremendously in the inner-city since the mid-1970s. The popularity of freebase cocaine or 'crack,' exploded in 1986 and 1987. Crack now dominates the illicit drug markets in many inner cities (Johnson and Williams, 1988). Cocaine and 'crack' selling by inner city youths has had major effects on low-income communities by offering substantial economic opportunities that undermine the willingness of such youths to work at low-wage legal jobs (Ball, et al., 1981; Johnson, 1985; Nurco, et al., 1985; Johnson, Lipton, and Wish, 1986; Chaiken and Johnson, 1988; Wexler, Lipton and Johnson, 1988). Violence in hard-drug use and selling has also increased in the 1980s. Despite increased arrests of drug sellers, community safety in the inner city has substantially declined in recent years (Bruce Johnson, et al., 1988). Because of increased governmental interest and available funding, a number of studies have been conducted within the last decade examining the nature and form of the crime-drug relationship (e.g., McGlothlin, 1979; Gandossy, et al., 1980; McBride and

McCoy, 1981; Johnson, et al., 1985; Nurco et al., 1985; Johnson, Lipton, and Wish, 1986; Wish and Johnson, 1986; Chaiken and Johnson, 1988; Wexler, Lipton, and Johnson, 1988). Research results show that:

(A) A large proportion of criminals have engaged in drug use, and a large proportion of drug users have engaged in criminal behavior (Voss and Stephen, 1973 ; Crime and Drugs, 1976; McBride, 1976, Gandossy, et al., 1980).

(B) Criminal behavior increases after the initiation of drug use (Stephens & McBride, 1976; Weisman, 1975).

(C) Among Miami narcotic users there has been an increase in violent behavior (McBride, 1981).

(D) Narcotic addicts are responsible for as many as 50 million crimes each year in the United States (Inciardi, 1985).

(E) Among youths who initiate criminality at an early age (thirteen or under), sizable proportions also initiate drug use and hard-drug use at early ages. Those predisposed toward criminality are at high risk for also becoming hard-drug users, although the majority may not become lifelong hard-drug users (Robins and Wish, 1978; Elliott and Huisinga, 1984).

(F) Heroin, cocaine and crack are expensive illicit

drugs. Many users, especially from inner-city poverty origins, quickly exhaust their legal resources and engage in cash-generating crimes (primarily thefts, burglary, robbery, and female prostitution) or drug-dealing crimes on a regular basis, from several times a week to two to ten times a day (Ball et al., 1981, 1982; Johnson and Wish, 1987; Anglin and Speckart, 1988; Johnson, Anderson, and Wish, 1988; Johnson, Kaplan, and Schmeidler, 1990).

(G) The most serious crimes (robbery and assaults) are committed primarily during periods of heaviest (daily, multiple daily) use of heroin and cocaine. Such offenders rarely commit these crimes during periods of less-than-weekly use of these drugs (Hunt, Lipton, and Spunt, 1983). Criminal income from robbery is rapidly expended, primarily on heroin and cocaine among speedballers in New York (Johnson and Wish, 1987; Johnson, Anderson, and Wish, 1988).

(H) Persons who engage in hard-drug sales must systematically protect themselves against arrest and incarceration and have no access to law enforcement to protect their property. Sellers at all levels must be prepared to resort to violence or its threat to control their associates. The economic returns to dealing organizations from drug sales are so substantial that many expensive goods and services can

be afforded to maintain control. Particularly important is the ability to purchase weapons, especially guns and automatic weapons (Johnson and Wish, 1987; Johnson, Anderson, and Wish, 1988).

Some researchers contend that selected drug substances play a primary role in triggering the transactions that ultimately lead to homicidal deaths. When the inhibitions of drug users are released coupled with other negative personal effects associated with drugs, the transactions become threatening and this may later escalate into physical confrontations (Rose, 1981; Hawkins, 1986).

Because of its widespread use, alcohol tends to dominate most discussions of violence and substance use. Goodman et al. (1986) conducted a study of blood alcohol levels in persons killed in Los Angeles between 1970 and 1979 and concluded that alcohol consumption was common among victims. Felson and Steadman (1983) studied 159 homicides and concluded that homicide victims were significantly more likely than assault victims to have used alcohol or drugs. Abel (1987) studied toxicological data for homicide victims in Erie County, New York, and found alcohol present in almost half of the victims and other drugs in a few others. Lawrence E. Gary at the Institute for Urban Affairs and Research at Howard University examined the role of drugs and alcohol in violence among minorities,

particularly homicide. This study and others sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) found a significant number of the offenders and victims to have been under the influence of drugs at the time of the homicidal act (Haberman and Baden, 1978: 8; Wolfgang, 1958; Gary, 1986).

In 1974, Zahn and Bencivengo reported that in Philadelphia in 1972, homicide was the leading cause of death among drug users, and accounted for approximately 31 percent of the homicides in Philadelphia that year. Monteforte and Spitz (1975) in a study of autopsy and police reports in Detroit suggest that drug use and distribution may be more strongly related to homicide than to property crime. Behavior that increases the probability for conflict is often thought to be associated with clusters of street corner men who congregate to drink, buy/sell drugs or to gamble (Harvey, 1986: 115; Rose, 1981: 93).

Conflicts growing out of robbery and commercial drug transactions and other acquisitive acts have a high likelihood of leading to violence (Humphrey and Palmer, 1986: 58). Preble (1980) conducted an ethnographic study of heroin addicts in East Harlem between 1965 and 1967. About fifteen years later, in 1979 and 1980, he followed up on the seventy-eight participants and obtained detailed information about what happened to them. He found that 28 had died.

Eleven, 40 percent of the deaths, were victims of homicide. Stephens and Ellis (1975) argued that criminal patterns of heroin users were shifting in the direction of greater amounts of violence. Ball, et al., (1983) studying heroin addicts in Baltimore, found the number of days containing violent crime perpetrations to be 18 times higher during initial addction periods as compared to initial days off opiates.

Marijuana is the most widely used drug other than alcohol, but is seldom associated with violent behavior (Inciardi, 1986:130).

Heroin and methadone derivatives were most often found in the bodies of New York homicide victims (Rose, 1981: 465). In a nine city survey of drug-related deaths, drug use in association with homicide, was found to be prevalent in Chicago, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. (Gottschalk, 1979). The study found that narcotics were primarily associated with drug-related deaths of persons who were young; black, Puerto Rican, or Mexican-American; unemployed; school drop outs, and, who were unmarried (Gottschalk, 1979).

Even though the relationship between drugs, crime and violence has been consistently documented in both the popular press and in scientific research there is a paucity of official research in the major national data sets (Uniform Crime Report, UCR; Bureau of Justice

Statistics, BJS; and National Crime Survey, NCS).

One of the major national data bases is the National Crime Survey (NCS). The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) publishes this report annually. BJS conducts these ongoing study interviews every six months using a cross sectional apparatus. The data are obtained from a stratified multistage longitudinal cluster sample throughout the United States. The sampling unit is the household. Survey questions are directed to all household respondents fourteen years of age and over who are asked to list all circumstances of victimization within the past year. The problem with trying to use this data base to study the link between drugs and violence is that the data is collected from households. Street drug users frequently are not part of a household, that is, frequently they are mobile and sleep in abandoned buildings or park benches. Thus this segment of the population that is at high risk for drug-related violence is underrepresented in the NCS data. Also many victims may not know the motives of the offenders for committing acts of violence against them. Finally, because the NCS data is a victim survey, it is unsuitable for a study of homicides and in fact does not cover homicides.

The Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) collected by the Federal Bureau of Investigations contains aggregated statistics of crimes known to law enforcement.

However, these reports do not include statistics on the drug-relatedness of violent crime. Therefore it is not possible to use the UCR data to ascertain the link between drugs and violence.

Reports from medical examiners also have limited information on the drug-homicide connection. Such data only provides information on the use/abuse by the victims. Finally, a National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) funded study claimed that there were 'structural barriers' associated with trying to use medical examiner statistics to depict the relationship between drugs and homicide (Gottschalk et al., 1979).

### Summary

Because of the aforementioned reasons, there is a serious lack of national or local data on the drug\homicide connection. The literature does disclose from a number of local studies a strong relationship between drugs and violence, however, there are no standardized concepts and operational definitions available on the relationship between drug use and homicides. In fact there is a dearth of theoretical frames of reference and operational definitions in this research area. The nature of the relationship between narcotic drugs and violent crimes including homicide remains a moot question. However, a few tentative explanatory models of drug use and violence are extant, and will be examined in the following section.



### Theoretical Models

Death might occur in any number of transactions associated with the acquisition of resources needed to secure drugs or with disputes growing out of conflicts between users and/or suppliers. Goldstein, Johnson, et al. (1985) have looked at the relationship between drug use and violent crimes, and conceptualized the whole phenomenon of drugs and violence into a useful theoretical framework:

#### A. Goldstein model:

1. Psychopharmacological model--suggests that some individuals as a result of short-term or long-term ingestion of specific substances, may become irrational and exhibit violent behavior. Substance use may also contribute to a person behaving violently, or it may alter a person's behavior in such a manner as to bring about that person's violent victimization. Finally some persons may ingest substances purposively in order to reduce nervousness or boost courage and thereby facilitate the commission of previously intended violent crimes.

2. Economically compulsive model--drug users engage in economically oriented violent crime to support costly drug use. Sometimes these economic crimes are violent, as in the case of robbery, and

sometimes the violence results from an unintended factor in the social context in which the economic crime is perpetrated. Such factors include the perpetrator's nervousness, the victim's reaction, the presence or absence of weapons carried by either victim or perpetrator, the intercession of bystanders, and so on. The point should be made here that not all studies are able to claim that robberies were, in fact, motivated by the compulsion to obtain money to purchase drugs. In some cases, the perpetrator may have been under the influence of drugs, such as barbiturates, and the robbery may have had more of a psychopharmacological motivation than an economic compulsive one. In other cases, robbers may celebrate a successful score by "partying" with drugs, such as cocaine. This need not imply that robbery was committed for the sole purpose of purchasing cocaine.

3. Systemic model--violent crime is intrinsic to the very involvement of any illicit substance. Systemic violence refers to the traditionally aggressive patterns of interactions within the system of drug trafficking, gangs and distribution. Examples of this violence includes: territorial disputes between rival drug dealers, assaults and homicides committed within dealing and trafficking hierarchies as a means of enforcement, robberies of drug dealers, and general disputes over drugs and drug paraphernalia.

The extent to which black subjects use these substances is likely to influence the risk of homicide victimization. This is the case because blacks are disproportionately involved in all homicides.

B. Sparks model:

Sparks (1982:59) outlines in another model three situations in which a person increases the probability of his/her victimization.

1. Precipitation--occurs when the victim is the first to use physical force against his/her offender or otherwise induce the offender to commit a crime (Wolfgang, 1958).

2. Facilitation--refers to the failure of person(s) to take due precaution to prevent themselves from becoming victimized. Unnecessary risk taking or negligence are examples of facilitation.

3. Opportunity--Broadly explained is the availability of attractive targets, either person or property for criminal victimization.

This study combines the aforementioned theoretical models of Goldstein, et al., "Conditions and situations inherent in the violent drug subculture;" and Sparks, "Situational factors in the victim/peretrator relationship.

## Chapter 3

### CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND METHODOLOGY

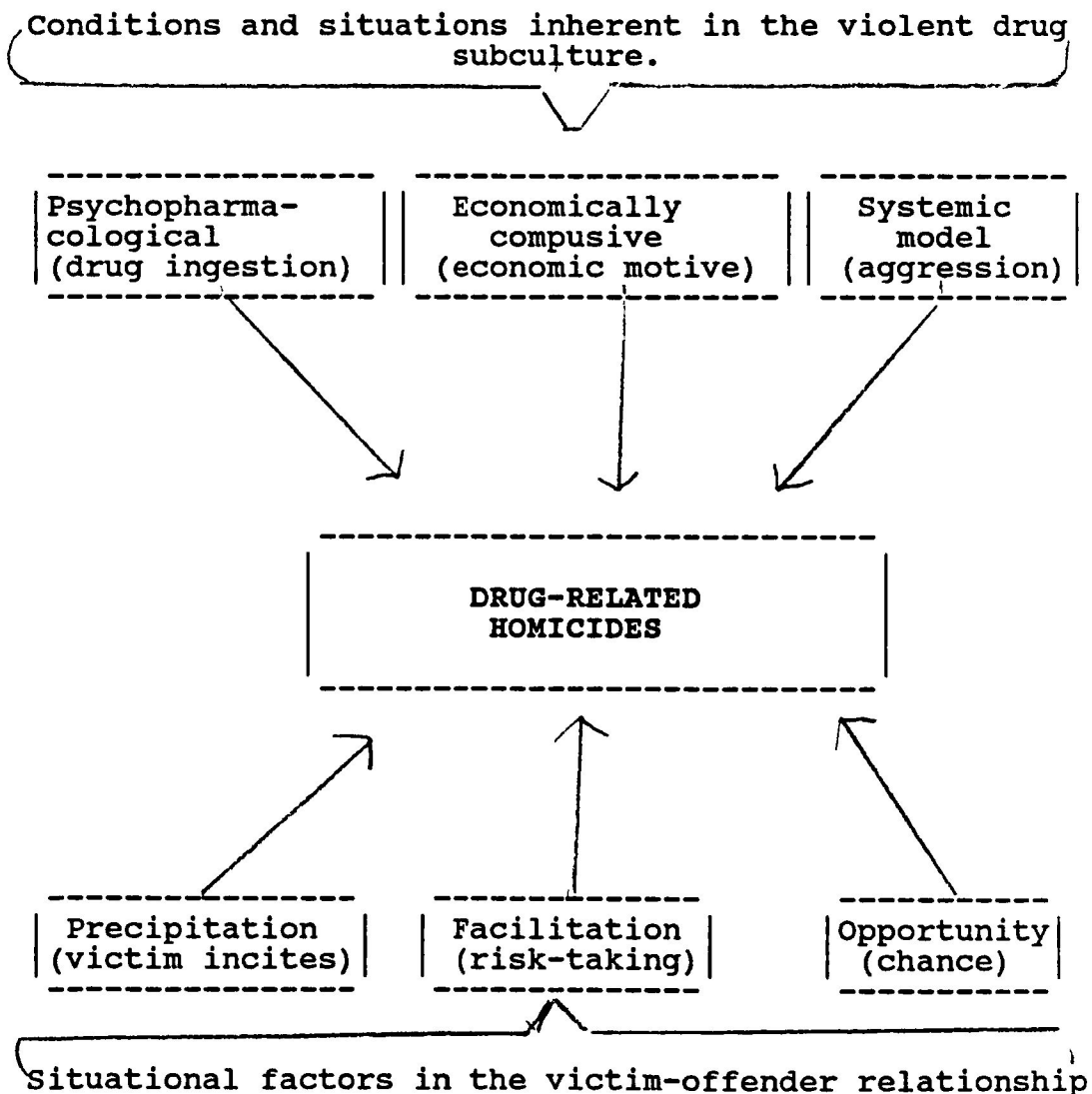
#### Conceptual Model

This study combines the two specific theoretical models reviewed in Chapter 2: (1) situations and conditions inherent in the violent drug culture (Goldstein, et al., 1985); and, (2) situational factors in the victim perpetrator-relationship (Sparks, 1982). As shown in figure 3.1 it was reasoned that a sociodemographic profile of drug-related homicide perpetrators and victims; along with a behavioral homicidal situation model would explain drug-related homicides more comprehensively. The following are some of the questions considered in designing the model:

- (1) How many of these acts were precipitated by economic: (robberies, soured drug deals, turf wars, etc.)?
- (2) What percentage of the homicidal acts can be attributed to the effects of drugs on the perpetrator(s) and/or victim(s)?
- (3) Did the homicide involve traditional aggressive patterns of interaction within the system of drug trafficking? What were these patterns?
- (4) What was the drug use history of the victim?
- (5) What are the roles of the victims and perpetrators (dealers, customers or innocent bystanders)?
- (6) What are the sociodemographic characteristics of the victims and perpetrator, age, race sex, educational level, income level, criminal history?
- (7) What homicides involved criminal gangs?
- (8) What type of weapon(s) were utilized in the homicide?

- (9) What was the type of relationship between the victim and offender before and at the time of the homicide?
- (10) Where did the homicide occur?
- (11) What were the situational factors in the homicide act?

**Figure 1: Conceptual model of drug-related homicides**



### Objective of The Study

The objective of this study is to provide empirical data which can be employed to generate some specific hypotheses for future research concerning drug-related homicides. In short, this research will:

- 1) Construct sociodemographic profiles of perpetrators and victims
- 2) Test a situational explanatory model of homicide, in terms of the availability of data.

### **Methodology**

#### (A) Data Collection Procedures

Initial contact for collecting the required data was established by a letter to the Chief of Police, Morris Redding, requesting his permission to get access to the case files. This letter was followed up by a personal phone call in which the purpose of the study and the data collection method were clearly stated. Permission was granted by the Chief of Police. Deputy Chief, Beverly Harvard, arranged for a background check. After the background check was completed, Lieutenant Horace Walker, became my contact person from the homicide division.

Data collection began in September 1989 and was completed in May 1990. A standardized data collection form was designed to collect all data on profiles and motivational variables. That is, criteria of the drug-relatedness of the homicide,

sociodemographic characteristics of perpetrator(s) and victim(s), (The files did not contain education level attained by the victim unless they had a criminal record). Data on the specific drugs used by victims and perpetrators were also recorded (however, I was unable to get information on the drug use history of the perpetrators); type of location, (e.g. drug sale site, shooting gallery, etc.); involvement of victims and perpetrators in drug trafficking; as well as the relationship of the perpetrator and victim. Finally a narrative account of "what happened" as related by the perpetrators and witnesses was also recorded.

(B) Criteria for the Selection of Cases

The criteria for selecting the cases utilized the theoretical framework discussed earlier in Chapter 2.

These criteria would allow the police officers and the courts to conclude that a particular homicide is drug-related. After speaking to investigators at the Homicide Division, it was decided that the following criteria would be used to select the cases: (1) Drugs and/or drug paraphernalia are found in the possession of the perpetrator and/or the victim; (2) witnesses report that the victim was killed for either (a) selling phony or adulterated drugs; or (b) during a robbery of a known drug house or dealer; or (c) during a territorial dispute between dealers. These criterias are discussed in detail below.

(i) Drugs and/or drugs paraphernalia found in the possession of the perpetrator and/or victim

When drugs and and/or paraphernalias are found in the possession of the victim and/or perpetrator investigators may use this to assess the drug relatedness of the crime. In such cases, the drug can be analyzed. However, the presence of contraband on the scene does not necessarily mean that the motive for the killing was drugs. For example, a husband and wife frequently engage in domestic violence. The husband is also a known drug dealer and sometimes keeps large amounts of drugs in the house. During one of their domestic altercations, the wife is killed. Drugs are found at the scene, but drugs was not the primary motivations for the killing. In the last analysis the homicide police investigator must make a judgemental call in the cases where drug paraphernalia is found on either party to the homicide; i.e., from the outcome of the complete investigation.

(2) Witnesses report on the drug-relatedness of the killing.

These criteria refer to information that may be known to the investigators prior to the killing or shortly after the killing. This information provides the investigators with feasible explanations as to motives and the situational context in which the homicide occurred. This type of lead is the strongest type of evidence that the investigator has to use and



is the one most frequently employed in classifying and labelling drug-related homicides.

Another way of classifying a homicide as drug-related is evidence of drug consumption (Monteforte and Spitz, 1975). Drug consumption is not always employed by the police as a criterion for defining drug-relatedness of homicides (even though data were collected on drug use and consumption by the victim it was not used in this study as a criterion for judging a homicide as drug-related). This connection is most often cited by the media in reporting on the drug homicide nexus (Atlanta Journal Constitution, April 14, 1989; January 25, 1990).

Currently, this type of evidence comes from toxicology reports produced by the Fulton County Medical Examiner's office. These tests are only performed on the victim. The police department does not automatically perform drug testing on the perpetrator. This information is only obtained through self-reporting by the perpetrator(s) to the police. One investigator reported that they do not rely on this evidence for classification, because many of the perpetrators report that they do not use drugs, but they do deal.

#### Discussion of the criteria

Known drug involvement information obtained by the police can provide information for the systemic and

opportunity model. Violence between rival dealers can also provide information for the precipitation and facilitation models.

Even though the city does not consistently utilize drug consumption as a classification criteria, there are some arguments that can be made in favor of utilizing this method. For example, drug consumption can usually tell us if the motive is psychopharmacological in nature. This evidence is also important in identifying the facilitation and precipitation model.

On the opposite side of this argument, evidence of drug consumption by victim or perpetrator does not necessarily mean that a homicide was drug-related in a motivational sense. Paul Goldstein (1985) in his report gives the following example to support the aforementioned argument.

A man who had recently smoked marijuana, may be killed by a jealous husband. The marijuana was totally unrelated to the slaying. Yet the evidence of consumption, a toxicology report for example may exist. In such a case it is valid to say that there was evidence of drug consumption by the homicide victim. It would require an extremely elastic definition of drug relatedness to say that the homicide itself was 'drug-related'.

#### (C) Sample Selection

The data utilized in the current research were collected from 105 homicides cases involving 130 perpetrators and 105 victims. The 105 killings

represent about 12 percent of the 889 homicides that reportedly occurred in the city over the past five years. According to the annual Atlanta Police Reports, there were 889 homicides for the years 1984 through 1988. Seventy-eight of which were classified as drug-related. Because motives for a large percentage of homicides are classified as unknown in the police reports, it is probable that the reported number of drug-related homicides is artificially low.

This study examined data collected on homicides officially classified as drug-related; as well as cases classified as 'unknown,' but "suspected to be drug-related" by the police, or the prosecutor's office.

Homicides were only classified as drug-related where there was sufficient information to clearly make that determination, utilizing the criteria discussed earlier. There were 105 drug-related or suspected to be drug-related cases as ascertained from the police files and interviews.

Detailed information regarding the 105 homicidal acts and related variables on the victims and perpetrators were collected. The sampling frame, was the 'LOG BOOK' of the Atlanta Police Homicide Department. The 'log book' lists homicides in the order of occurrence. It also contains names of victims and perpetrators, weapon used, motive, day, date, time

and the place of occurrence.

The primary sampling unit was a list of all 'drug-related' homicides committed in the city of Atlanta for the years 1984 through 1988.

(D) Description of Case Files

Case report data is frequently employed in homicide studies (Wolfgang, 1958; Lundgaarde, 1977). Using this approach to study homicide, when handled effectively, can add a dimension to the cases, that is not included in aggregate statistical analysis (Babbie, 1983).

In this research, police homicide case files contained a range of information, that permitted a partial reconstruction of homicide events and data describing the characteristics of those involved. The case file contained the following demographic variables: race, age, level of education, area of residence, place off homicide, drug use history, employment history and circumstances of incidence and motives as specified by witnesses and perpetrators.

Part one of the police homicide files contains the responding officer's report including: homicide date and time of day, weather conditions, and position of the body when found. Part two of the files contains background information on the victim(s), age, sex, income level, and details about the fatal wound(s); including a diagram showing position of the body when

found and the inflicting wound(s). Part three comprises the witnesses account of the events including their description of the perpetrator(s). Part four includes the information on the perpetrator(s): education, family, and criminal background. It also contains a copy of the perpetrators statement on the homicide events (if they gave one). The last part of the files contains the final report of the investigator, copy of the arrest warrant, and the perpetrators signature indicating they were read their rights. It also provides notice of the case being bound over to the Superior Court for trial.

In a separate packet of the file are pictures of the victim(s), scene of the crime, physical evidence and weapons.

(E) Analytical Procedures

The analysis of the data was done in two stages. In the first stage the profiles of the perpetrators and victims were constructed utilizing the following variables: age, race, education level, criminal history and social economic level. In the second stage the situation explanatory model was tested utilizing the data collected on weapon, drug involved, victim and offender relationship, and the motives and events leading to the homicide act.

Each victim is considered to be a separate case (this method of counting is comparable to that used for

the UCR). The number of cases is equal to the number of victims (105). For purposes of analysis, all cases have as many perpetrators as were known to the Atlanta homicide division. At least one, but no more than five, perpetrators are counted for each case, so the number of perpetrators (130) exceeds the number of cases. Alcohol is not considered as a drug in the cases analyzed.

## Chapter 4

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### A. PROFILE ANALYSIS:

The overwhelming number of perpetrators and victims were young, black males. The distribution of both victims and perpetrators by age, gender, race and residence for the years 1984 through 1988 are shown in Table 4.1. (For a more detail see appendicies A.1 through A.8.) The perpetrators on the average were two to three years younger than the victims. The distribution of perpetrators and victims by income show that both were in a low income category (see Table 4.2 and 4.3). They also lived in low income areas. Occupations of perpetrators ranged from small time drug dealers to janitors and construction workers. Educational level was available only on perpetrators (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.1

HOMICIDE VICTIMS & PERPETRATORS BY AGE/GENDER/RACE  
ATLANTA 1984 TO 1988  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION

Age (in Years)	Victims	Perpetrators
Und 16	4	-
16-20	17	28
21-25	31	48
26-30	23	25
31-35	14	13
36-40	5	8
over 40	11	8
Race		
Black	81	121
White	17	8
Hispanic	7	1
Other	-	-
Gender		
Male	87	126
Female	18	4



Table 4.2

**HOMICIDE VICTIMS BY ECONOMIC STATUS  
ATLANTA 1984 THROUGH 1988  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION (N = 105)**

Income Category	1984 (N=14)	1985 (N=17)	1986 (N=18)	1987 (N=24)	1988 (N=32)
Low-Income	13	14	15	20	30
Mid-Income	-	3	2	3	2
High Income	-	-	1	1	-

low Income = \$8,00.00 or less per year

Middle income = 8,100.00 to 25,000.00 per year

High Income = 25,100.00 or more per year.

Source: 1980 Census Data.

Table 4.3

**HOMICIDE PERPETRATOR BY ECONOMIC STATUS  
ATLANTA 1984 THROUGH 1988  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION (N = 130)**

Income Category	1984 (N=18)	1985 (N=25)	1986 (N=20)	1987 (N=26)	1988 (N=41)
Low-Income	16	25	20	26	40
Mid-Income	2	-	-	-	1
High Income	-	-	-	-	-

Low Income = \$8,00.00 or less per year

Middle Income = 8,100 to 25,000 per year

High Income = 25,100.00 or more per year

Source: 1980 Census Data

The perpetrators came from predominantly low income background. Their occupations ranged from small time drug dealers to janitors and construction workers.

Table 4.4

**HOMICIDE PERPETRATORS BY EDUCATION  
ATLANTA 1984 THROUGH 1988  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION (N = 130)**

Education	1984 (N=18)	1985 (N=25)	1986 (N=20)	1987 (N=26)	1988 (N=41)
Less than high	18	25	19	24	38
High School to some college	-	-	1	2	3
Above college	-	-	-	-	-

1. Less than high school: Did not graduate from high school.
2. High School to College: High school graduate and/or at least two years of college
3. Above College: College degree and above.

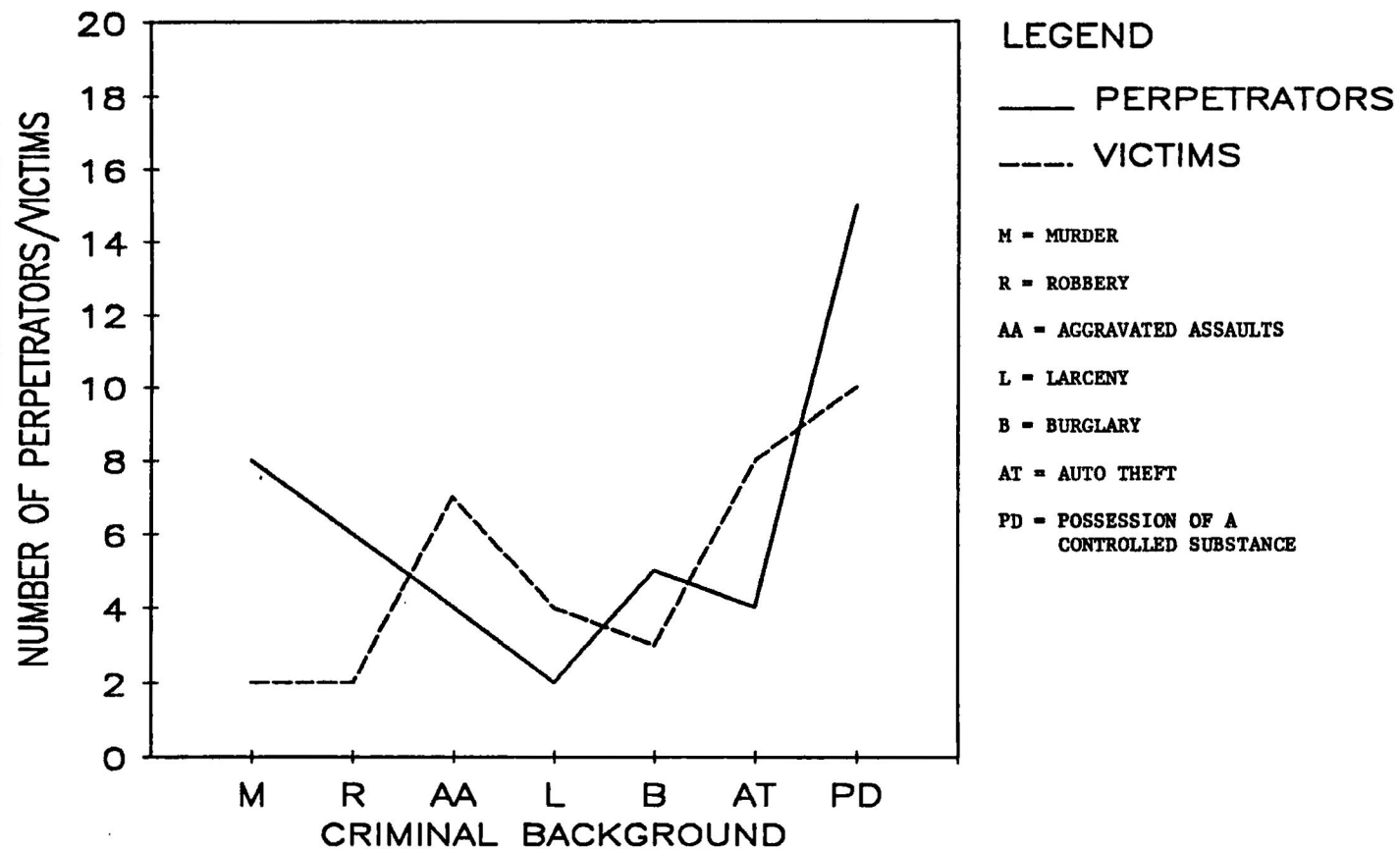
It should be noted that some of the perpetrators were juveniles and still in school when the homicides occurred, which partially accounts for the overwhelming majority of them listed in the less than high school category.

All of the perpetrators had long histories of involvement with crimes. The types of crime mentioned with the perpetrators include six of the index crimes: murder, robbery, larceny, auto theft, aggravated assault and burglary. Eight of the perpetrators had served time for manslaughter. In one case the perpetrator had been convicted on two different occasions for manslaughter. The time span between the two charges was five years. Other types of criminal activity recorded include: possession of unlicensed firearm, possession of controlled substance, and probation violation.

Crimes listed for victims include: prostitution, simple battery, possession of firearms and manslaughter.

In two different cases, the victims had previously been charged with manslaughter. In the first case, the victim had served five years for involuntary manslaughter. He had a criminal record dating back to 1957. In another case, the victim was acquitted of murder one week prior to his murder.

Figure 4.1: HOMICIDE PERPETRATORS/VICTIMS  
CRIMINAL BACKGROUND  
ATLANTA 1984 - 1988



### Discussion of Profiles

Victims and their killers were overwhelmingly young, black male. The findings in these cases are consistent with other studies which shows that an inordinately high risk of homicidal death exists within the black community. Fatal confrontations among blacks typically result in the murder of a young male by another young black male (Hawkins, 1986; Rose and McClain, 1981). Level of education attained by the perpetrators showed that most had dropped out of school, and turned to a life of crime and drug-dealing. Recent studies have shown that success in the educational system is vital to one's life chances. The inverse of this position tends to imply that a lack of success in the educational system relegates one to a menial position in the labor force at best, or participation in the shadow economy at worst (Rose and McClain, 1981). Persons with limited skills, often have difficulty obtaining jobs, or at least obtaining jobs that provide a measure of financial security. Moreover, the dissatisfaction associated with low status jobs and the limited financial rewards often lead workers into lifestyles that enhance aggressive behavior (Rose and McClain, 1981; Newman, 1979; Hawkins, 1986).

During informal interviews with the investigators it was reported that the victims resembled the

perpetrators in terms of education, and occupational level, i.e. both are low.

## B. Explanatory Model Discussion

The most common weapon used to commit the crime was some sort of gun (handgun, rifle, shotgun). A knife was the second most commonly used weapon (Table 4.5).

In the cases reviewed 69 percent of the victims were acquainted with the perpetrators. These relationship ranged from dealer/dealer to dealer/buyer (Table 4.6).

Fifty-three percent of the homicides resulted from spontaneous disputes between dealers and buyers over the quality of the drug (Table 4.7).

Crack/cocaine was the drug common to all of the homicides with heroin mentioned twice (Figure 4.2).

All of the homicides took place in low-income projects. The areas within the projects included vacant apartments, street corners and behind apartment buildings.

The files showed that the victims were more often drug users than the perpetrators. There was nothing in the records to show that the perpetrators were users. The Fulton County Medical Examiner's Office reports that almost half of the city's homicide victims had traces of cocaine in their system when they died (Community Epidemiology Work Group, June, 1988 ). Other types of drugs found in the system of the victims include: Lidocaine, which is used to cut or stretch the cocaine, morphine, and phenobarbitol.



## Drug Related Homicides Drug Involved

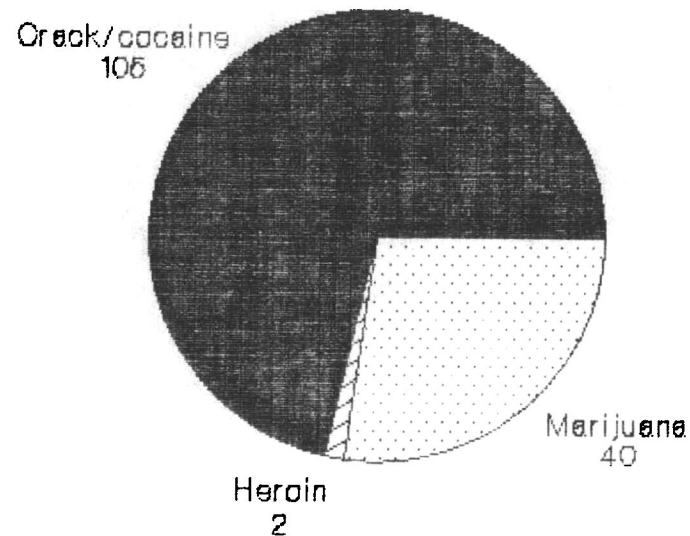


Figure 4.2

43

Source: Atlanta Police Department

Table 4.5

**HOMICIDE EVENTS BY WEAPONS USED  
ATLANTA 1984 THROUGH 1988  
( N = 105)**

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Drug-Related</u>
Shot-Rifle	18
Handgun	65
Cutting Instrument	12
Physical Force	5
Blunt Instrument	5
Other	-

Table 4.6

**HOMICIDES EVENTS  
RELATIONSHIP OF PERPETRATOR TO VICTIM  
ATLANTA 1984 THRU 1988 (N = 130)**

Drug-Related

---

Relationship

Spouse/Common Law	-
Boy-Girlfriend	1
Intra-family	5
Friend/Acquaintance	30
Stranger	17
Unknown	16
<b>DRUG-BUSINESS RELATION</b>	
a: Dealer/Buyer	40
b: Dealer/Dealer	20

The following examples reveal some of the situational context within which the homicides between dealer/buyer and dealer/dealer occurred (Table 4.6).

#### Dealer to buyer

Black male perpetrator sold soap to B/M victim for crack. Victim came back and demanded his money back. An argument ensued and victim pulled a knife, perpetrator shot him with a .357 magnum.

Black male suspect sold 3 bags of crack to B/M victim. After victim left he discovered that 2 bags of the crack was mixed with soap. He returned to the suspect to get his money back, while arguing to get his money back, he was shot.

#### Dealer/Dealer Relationship

Black male victim was approached by 'Miami Boys' and told to stop selling drugs in Harris Homes. He refused and was shot by the gang.

Black male victim sold drugs in the area. He allegedly ripped off his supplier. A contract was taken out on the victim. He was shot several times by his supplier.

#### Friends/Acquaintance involvement in drug-related deaths

Dealer and buyer were arguing over \$50.00 worth of crack\cocaine. Fight broke out and they both pulled a gun, the girlfriend of the dealer was accidentally shot to death.

Black female victim was given money to buy drugs for perpetrator. She tricked him possibly by giving him soap. He shot her. Victim and perpetrator were friends, she had bought drugs for him on several different occasions.

#### Intra-Family relationship

White male beat his grandmother to death after she refused to give money. Reportedly he wanted the money to purchase crack/cocaine.

Six month old black female baby was killed by young mother. Mother was high on crack/cocaine and baby kept

crying so she started to shake her, baby later died.

Motive Unknown

Black female victim was fatally wounded in the crossfire of a shootout when she stopped her car at an intersection. Witnesses report that the shootout was between rival dealers. Police list the motive as unknown.

Black male victim a 'known drug dealer' was gunned down in a parking lot in southeast Atlanta by three men with semi-automatic weapons. Allegedly a drug-related robbery. Police list motive as unknown.

Table 4.7

**HOMICIDE EVENTS BY MOTIVES  
ATLANTA 1984 THRU 1988  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION (N = 105)**

Drug-Related	
<hr/>	
<u>Motive</u>	
Robbery	31
Burglary	5
Child Abuse	1
Psychotic	1
Sex Crime	-
Argument	4
Unknown	3
 <u>Drug Related Transaction</u>	
Dispute	
a: money	16
b: drugs	34
c: turf	10

The following examples will explain the differences between motives unknown and drug-related transactions.

Dispute\Drugs -- B/M victim was dealing drugs and tried to talk B/M perpetrator into buying drugs from him. Victim became upset when perpetrator would not purchase drugs from him. Fight ensued, victim was stabbed.

Dispute\Money -- B/M perpetrator (juvenile) was given drugs to sell. Discrepancy arose over the amount of money that perpetrator got for the drugs. B/M victims said that he was short-changed and he was going to kill him for his money. He went looking for the perpetrator with an automatic weapon, perpetrator heard that he was looking for him, so he shot the dealer as he was walking up his driveway.

Dispute/Turf -- Young B/M victim was selling packets of cocaine at an outdoor "stop and cop" - a location where drug users can make quick purchases without leaving their cars - at Techwood Homes housing project. About 11 p.m. a car pulled up and four men (B/M) stepped out and opened fire on the victim, striking him eight times. The perpetrators were members of the 'Miami Boy's and they shot the perpetrator because he was selling on their turf.

Robbery -- Young B/M victim was known to rob crack dealers of their money, crack and jewelry. He was shot while attempting to rob a dealer at the corner of the McDaniel Glenn housing project.

Examples taken from motives unknown but believed to be drug-related.

Robbery -- 18 year old southeast Atlanta black man -- described by a witness as a neighborhood crack dealer who often carried as much as \$1000.00 in cash-- was shot in what investigators believed to have been a drug robbery. The police public affairs office lists the motive as unknown.

Unknown -- B/M victim sold liquor and drugs from his house. His house was burglarized and he was found shot to death inside. Police public affairs lists it as motive unknown.

Table 4.8

**HOMICIDES BY CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK  
ATLANTA 1984 THRU 1988 (N = 105)**

	<u>N</u>
Psychopharmacological	1
Economic Compulsive	1
Systemic	103

This section classifies the homicides according to the conceptual framework. Homicides were only classified as drug-related where the police department had sufficient information to clearly make that determination.

Table 4.8 shows that the overwhelming majority of the drug-related cases in this study were systemic, one was considered to be psychopharmacological and one was classified as economic compulsive. All of the homicide events involved crack/cocaine.



The following are examples taken from each of the conceptual framework.

#### Systemic/Opportunity

Witnesses report both victim and perpetrator are drug dealers. Perpetrator (hispanic male) had previously shot someone for owing him money for drugs. B/M victim was shot for owing perpetrator money and hiding cocaine from him.

#### Systemic\Precipitation

Three days before the homicide, B/M victim and an unidentified male robbed the B/M perpetrator at gunpoint taking his money and drugs (crack). They made him strip and tied him up in the back of his truck. The perpetrator and victim were long time acquaintance. Perpetrator was a lieutenant in a drug organization in Atlanta, and victim use to buy drugs from the perpetrator. Perpetrator said on some occasions he use to give the victim drugs if he did not have the money. But after the victim robbed and 'degraded' him in front of his friends, he had to kill him.

#### Systemic/Facilitation

White victim and friend went to Poole Creek project to buy cocaine. Car was approached by three black men. After victim tasted the coke he said coke was no good and demanded his money back. The B/M perpetrator told the victim to "buy or die" Victim argued with the perpetrator and his friends to get his money back. Perpetrator shot him. Witnesses report that white males often come into the area to trade guns for cocaine.

Young B/M victim and a companion were approached by two black men. The men asked the victim for \$10.00 worth of crack. After victim produced the crack, the suspect told him that he only had \$9.00. The victim refused and the suspect pulled a gun and pointed it at the victim's head. Then he robbed the victim and his friend of an undetermined amount of drugs, money, and jewelry. Victim was arguing during the robbery, suspect shot him in the head and ran.

Psychopharmacological

Black female with a six month old baby. Her mother was reportedly high on crack and the baby was crying and she couldn't get her to stop crying. She picked up the baby and started shaking her.

Economic Compulsive

Perpetrator, black male age 35, use to do odd jobs for elderly woman, victim age 62. She apparently caught him burglarizing her house, he tied her up, raped and killed her. During his confession he told investigators that he was trying to get some money. He was addicted to crack.

### Discussion of Systemic Homicides

The most common circumstances of systemic homicides were territorial fights between rival dealers and homicides that occurred during arguments over drug quality. Other common circumstances of systemic violence included assault to collect drug money, and robbery of drug dealer. Under territorial disputes some of the cases involve organized gangs. The gangs are organized by housing projects, that is, each housing project has gangs to protect their selling turf. Still, there were a few cases where the perpetrators were not dealers, but were carrying out the act for someone else.

Table 4.9

#### **CIRCUMSTANCES OF SYSTEMIC HOMICIDES ATLANTA 1984 THRU 1988 (N = 103)**

	<u>N</u>
Territorial Dispute	10
Robbery of Drug Dealer	40
Assault to Collect Drug Money	16
Dealer Sold Bad Drugs	37
Other	-

The following cases are examples of the circumstances involved in the systemic homicides.

#### Territorial Dispute

There was a shootout in the Carver Home Housing project between two different groups of black men. One group was reportedly members of the 'Miami boys' drug gang and the Carver Home drug gang. Victim was a member of the Carver Home gang.

Victim, black male age 18, was selling drugs in McDaniel Glenn Projects, he was not part of the project gang. According to his girlfriend he was selling to earn extra money, but he was planning on quitting. Members of the project gang ordered him to stop selling on a particular street corner in the project. He refused and one day while he was walking back to his apartment they chased him behind an empty building and shot him six times.

#### Robbery of Drug Dealer

Black victim was a known drug dealer, he sold marijuana, crack/cocaine, and liquor out of his house. He was found strangled in his apartment. The marijuana and crack/cocaine were missing. He apparently was killed during a robbery of his house.

Victim and three of his friends went over to John Hope Homes. Witnesses report that they often came over there to rob the dealers. Shots were fired victim was killed and two of his friends were wounded.

#### Dealer Sold Bad Drugs

Victim, a young black man age 21, was selling drugs (crack) that was mixed. Perpetrator (black male, 20) started to argue with him about the quality of his drugs, they started to fight and victim was shot.

Victim, black male got into an argument with the perpetrator about the amount of crack that was in the baggie, victim refused to return the perpetrator's money. The perpetrator pulled a gun and ordered him to return his money; when he did he shot him as a warning. Victim died a few days later at the hospital. Victim was acquitted of murder one week prior to this murder.

Assault to Collect Drug Money

Victim (young black male age 16) was given drugs to sell for perpetrator (black male, age 32). He short changed the perpetrator by \$75.00, perpetrator shot him as a lesson to his other workers about 'messing up' the money.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

The data presented in the present study were structured in terms of perpetrator-victim profiles and an explanatory model described in Chapter 3. Several findings emerged from the study.

#### Profiles:

The perpetrators and victims were predominantly young, black, undereducated, poor males with prior criminal records residing in low income neighborhoods.

#### Model

(1) In the cases reviewed, 69 percent of the victims/offenders were acquainted. These relationships ranged from dealer-buyer to dealer-dealer. It is widely acknowledged that most victims of homicide were previously known or acquainted with their assailants.

(2) The most frequently used weapon was the handgun. During an earlier period when the vast majority of all homicides were an outgrowth of angry confrontations, the gap between guns and knives as weapons of choice was much smaller (Rose and Deskins, 1986:70). An increase in the frequency of felony-related conflicts as opposed to conflicts based on anger has increased the demand for handguns by both those with criminal intentions and those who simply wish to defend themselves and their property (Rose and Deskins, 1986:72). In drug-related homicides the

handgun was the weapon of choice.

(3) One hundred and three of the 105 drug-related homicides were classified as systemic; i.e. they stemmed from a sub-culture of violence inherring in the matrix of the drug-trafficking and drug distribution system. Crack/cocaine was the sole drug involved in all of the homicides events. The economic compulsive case and the psychopharmacological case also involved crack/cocaine, i.e. drug affects.

(4) The data shows that much of the violence associated with the cases classified as drug related, were more often associated with acts designed to insure access to drugs robbery, sour drug deals and turf wars rather than to drug consumption.

The most common systemic violence was disputes between buyer and dealers, followed by disputes between rival dealers. Dealers and customers interacted in a highly unstable and competitive environment in which disagreements and conflicts were often settled by use the of physical force in a situation where the perpetrator or the victim (or both) was carrying a weapon. Disputes between rival dealers were also settled by physical force, whereby each dealer was trying to protect his turf or intimidate competitors. Only two homicides events involved irrational behavior due to the affects of the drug. Thus it is the behavior associated with participation in the drug

culture rather than the ingestion of drugs that heightens the risk of victimization in the cases under study. Drug trafficking in the low income neighborhoods of Atlanta where these perpetrators and victims reside, have significantly contributed to the decline in community safety, and the risk of death at an early age.

### Policy Implications

(1) There were only two cases that were classified as economic compulsive, and psychopharmacological. If it should be found that other homicides do occur because of the need to satisfy the cravings for drug(s), then strategies must be formulated to eliminate or reduce the situations that motivate users to commit murder or violence to obtain drugs or money to purchase drugs. For these cases treatment facilities must be geared towards aggressive behaviors related to drug use. Emphasis in such case should be placed on policies that would help the user cease this craving rather than policies that drive up the cost of such drugs e.g. raids, tenent evictions etc.

(2) Because the overwhelming majority of the homicide incidents involved systemic violence the polices should focus on the phenomenon of drug



trafficking and those engaged in the drug trade. Persons involved in the drug trade are those most likely to perpetrate homicides. Limited resources should not be wasted on occasional drug users.

(3) This study identifies the high risk homicide group; young, black males (both offenders and victims). This group needs more effective programs geared toward helping them escape the necessity of choosing lifestyles that are risk promoting, e.g. drug dealing and using. The data shows that the primary means of employment for both perpetrators and offenders was drug dealing. If programs are not developed to provide opportunities for these groups drug-related homicides will continue. Specifically, educational programs, are needed for this targeted group. The data show that the majority of the offenders did not complete high school, and were employed in unskilled or illegal occupations. School suspensions and drop-outs are all indicators of persons who might engage in risk taking behaviors. Training programs must be developed to successfully educate and train persons who do not fare well in the traditional school setting.

(4) More effective control and rehabilitation of potential and actual offenders must be developed by the various agencies of the criminal justice system (corrections, courts, probation/parole). Many of the

perpetrators and victims in this study had served time in prison and jails. Ten percent had served time for manslaughter.

(5) Federal and state gun laws should be enacted that would limit and restrict the handguns that were found to be present in most of drug-related homicides.

Finally, more scientific research is needed to find out more about the nature and extent of the drug homicide connection.

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## A.1

**HOMICIDE VICTIMS BY AGE/GENDER/RACE  
ATLANTA 1984 THRU 1988 (N = 105)  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION**

Age by Years

	1984 (N=14)	1985 (N=17)	1986 (N=18)	1987 (N=24)	1988 (N=32)
Und 16	-	1	-	-	3
16-20	-	-	3	4	10
21-25	5	5	7	9	5
26-30	3	6	3	5	6
31-35	1	2	3	4	4
36-40	1	1	-	1	2
Over 40	4	2	2	1	2

Race

Black	12	15	14	17	23
White	2	2	4	4	5
Hispanic	-	-	-	3	4
Other	-	-	-	-	-

Gender

Male	11	12	15	20	29
Female	3	5	3	4	3

## A.2

**BLACK HOMICIDE VICTIMS BY AGE/GENDER**  
**ATLANTA 1984 THRU 1988**  
**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION (N = 81)**

**RACE/ETHNICITY**

	1984 (N= 12)	1985 (N= 15)	1986 (N=14)	1987 (N=17)	1988 (N=23)
Und 16	-	1	-	-	3
16 - 20	-	-	3	4	10
21 - 25	4	5	5	6	3
26 - 30	2	6	2	4	2
31 - 35	1	-	2	2	2
36 - 40	1	1	-	1	2
over 40	4	2	2	-	1

**GENDER**

Male	11	10	11	15	20
Female	1	5	3	2	3

## A.5

**HOMICIDE PERPETRATORS BY AGE/GENDER/RACE  
ATLANTA 1984 THRU 1988 (N = 130)  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION**

Age by Years

	1984 (N=18)	1985 (N=25)	1986 (N=20)	1987 (N=26)	1988 (N=41)
Und 16	-	-	-	-	-
16-20	3	10	4	5	6
21-25	9	6	8	10	15
26-30	3	3	3	4	12
31-35	1	2	2	3	5
36-40	-	1	2	2	3
Over 40	2	3	1	2	-

Race

Black	17	23	19	24	38
White	1	2	1	1	3
Hispanic	-	-	-	1	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-

Gender

Male	17	24	20	26	39
Female	1	1	-	-	2

## A.6

**BLACK HOMICIDE PERPETRATORS BY AGE/GENDER  
ATLANTA 1984 THRU 1988 (N = 101)  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION**

**RACE/ETHNICITY**

	1984 (N=17)	1985 (N=23)	1986 (N=19)	1987 (N=24)	1988 (N= 38)
Und 16	-	-	-	-	-
16 - 20	3	10	4	5	6
21 - 25	8	6	8	9	13
26 - 30	3	1	2	3	11
31 - 35	1	2	2	3	5
36 - 40	-	1	2	2	3
over 40	2	3	1	2	-

**GENDER**

Male	16	22	19	24	36
Female	1	1	-	-	2

## A.3

WHITE HOMICIDE VICTIMS BY AGE/GENDER  
ATLANTA 1984 THRU 1988  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION (N = 17)

## RACE/ETHNICITY

	1984 (N= 2)	1985 (N= 2)	1986 (N= 4)	1987 (N= 4)	1988 (N= 5)
Und 16	-	-	-	-	-
16 - 20	-	-	-	-	-
21 - 25	1	-	2	1	1
25 - 30	-	-	-	-	-
26 - 30	1	-	1	1	2
31 - 35	-	2	1	1	1
36 - 40	-	-	-	-	-
over 40	-	-	-	1	1
Gender					
Male	2	2	4	2	5
Female	-	-	-	2	-

## A.4

HISPANIC HOMICIDE VICTIMS BY AGE/GENDER  
ATLANTA 1984 THRU 1988  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION (N = 7 )

## RACE/ETHNICITY

	1984 (N= 0)	1985 (N= 0)	1986 (N= 0)	1987 (N= 3)	1988 (N= 4)
Und 16	-	-	-	-	-
16 - 20	-	-	-	-	-
21 - 25	-	-	-	2	1
26 - 30	-	-	-	-	2
31 - 35	-	-	-	1	1
36 - 40	-	-	-	-	-
over 40	-	-	-	-	-

## Gender

Male	-	-	-	3	4
Female	-	-	-	-	-

Hispanic victims were identified as being Cuban  
Marielito and Puerto Rican.

## A.7

**HISPANIC HOMICIDE PERPETRATORS BY AGE/GENDER  
ATLANTA 1984 THRU 1988  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION (N = 1 )**

**RACE/ETHNICITY**

	1984 (N= 0)	1985 (N= 0)	1986 (N= 0)	1987 (N= 1)	1988 (N= 0)
Und 16	-	-	-	-	-
16-20	-	-	-	-	-
21-25	-	-	-	-	-
26-30	-	-	-	1	-
31-35	-	-	-	-	-
36-40	-	-	-	-	-
over 40	-	-	-	-	-

**GENDER**

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Male	-	-	-	1	-
Female	-	-	-	-	-

The hispanic was identified as a Marielito Cuban



## A.8

**WHITE HOMICIDE PERPETRATORS BY AGE/GENDER  
ATLANTA 1984 THRU 1988  
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION (N = 8)**

**RACE/ETHNICITY**

	1984 (N= 1)	1985 (N= 2)	1986 (N= 1)	1987 (N= 1)	1988 (N= 3)
Und 16	-	-	-	-	-
16-20	-	-	-	-	-
21-25	1	-	-	1	2
26-30	-	2	1	-	1
31-35	-	-	-	-	-
36-40	-	-	-	-	-
over 40	-	-	-	-	-

**GENDER**

Male	1	2	1	1	3
Female	-	-	-	-	-

**Appendix B****HOMICIDE EVENTS ATLANTA 1984 THRU 1988**  
**Demographic Characteristics**PerpetratorVictim

Age

Race

Education

Income Level

sex

Criminal Record

Drug Use  
History

**HOMICIDE EVENTS ATLANTA 1984 THRU 1988**

Weapon

Shotgun-rifle  
Handgun  
Cutting Instrument  
Physical force  
Blunt Instrument  
Other

Motive

Premeditated dispute  
Spontaneous dispute  
Child Abuse  
Psychotic-Irrational  
Unknown  
Robbery  
Burglary  
Arson  
Drug-Related Transaction  
Youth gang related  
Turf War

Victim-Offender Relationship

Spouse  
Common Law  
Boy-girlfriend  
Other Intra-family

Friends\acquaintances

Stranger

Unknown

Location

Vacant building

Open area

Commercial site

Public building

Residence

Drug Location

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_\_

Type of drug location

Shooting gallery

Drug factory

Drug sales location

Drug Trade Involvement

Beleived to be trafficker

High level

low level

At \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ Event  
Victim

Offender

Drugs found on or near

paraphernalia found on or near

High on drugs or alcohol